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must furnish as ample and attractive accommodations, and in as free a spirit. Build large and beautiful churches, with towers and spires, with recess and vestibule, with stained glass windows or open dome, with frescoed walls and upholstered seats and carpeted floors, with illuminated texts of Scripture, and statuary and paintings, if you please, with organ and choir, and this not only in the auditorium or place of the great congregation, but especially in the lecture or Sunday school room where the children meet; let no pains or expense be spared to make it a perfect parlor or palace, and if you can have fountains and flowers and singing birds here, so much the better, in order that the first impressions of the children in connection with the place of worship might be of the most beautiful and enchanting.

This will cost money—true, let it cost, and let the rich pay it—they will be the better for it—there is abundance of means in the church for this, and if the taste can be cultivated and the conscience educated to this standard, there will be no lack of means. Then, with such churches, and a kind welcome from the usher, and a pleasant smile from the pew, and a cheerful, plain Gospel out of a warm heart from the pulpit, we will no longer be embarrassed with the questions, How can we make the church attractive? or, How bring the Gospel to bear upon the poor?

AMERICAN ART NEWS.

BOSTON.

The excellent article in your last number, from the pen of Rev. E. E. Hale, noticed the action of our legislature concerning free drawing schools. About two hundred persons have already applied for admission to such a school, to be established at our Institute of Technology, and about the same number have enrolled their names at Cambridge. All towns in the Commonwealth having more than ten thousand inhabitants, are required to provide such a school, and incalculable benefit in the way of popular art education must result. An instructor from the famous South Kensington schools is expected ere long to take the chief direction of the enterprise. His head-quarters will be at the Institute of Technology where preparations are making for eight hundred pupils. Thomas Hill's painting of the "White Mountain Notch," is yet on exhibition at Childs & Co.'s gallery. In the public gallery of the same house are several smaller subjects, by Mr. Hill, which are considered very creditable to him, but a snow scene among them we think hardly worthy of his pencil.

Gerry has in the same gallery a most poetic composition, entitled "The Pasture Gate."

Cass exhibits a fine fruit piece, and upon the walls of the salesroom, at this establishment, are several pastels of fruit by Enneking which admirably manifest the advantages of colored crayon for fruit drawing.

Billings has just finished a fine head of Wendell Phillips.

Virgil Williams has nearly completed a series of sporting scenes in his usual spirited style.

In my last I wrote you that the contract for the city soldier's monument had been given to Millmore. The city has already expended \$12,000 in placing a base for the monument on "Flag Staff

Hill" on the common, and, I think, it is to pay Mr. Millmore \$75,000 for his work. I can scarcely give you an intelligent description of the details of the plan without taking too much of your space. In short, its base is to be thirty-three feet square, its height about one hundred feet, with panels, bas-reliefs and allegorical statues, in appropriate positions, and the whole surmounted by a statue fourteen feet high, representing America. About three years will be required for the completion of the monument.

The "Boston Art Club" is under full sail again, and now have a "local habitation" in admirable quarters opposite the common. The Art "reception" at these rooms, recently, was an encouraging evidence that interest in art is not diminishing in Boston.

Williams & Everett commence the year without change in their business relations, but not so do our other fine art houses. Messrs. Hendrickson, Doll & Richards dissolve, and the two latter gentlemen take the establishment of the late Mr. DeVries. "Mr. L. A. Elliot leaves his old stand on Washington street, and, with two other gentlemen, goes to the Childs gallery, Tremont street, under the firm name of Elliot, Blakeslee & Noyes—Mr. Childs remaining with them. Mr. Joseph Ward is selling out at auction, and, we understand, designs to relinquish the business.

I almost forgot to say that we rejoice in the return of Albert F. Bellows to us. His English sketches are most charming. When shall we see the day of appreciation of good water colors in America?

BOSTONIAN.

NEW YORK.

At no time during the past year has so much activity been witnessed in art circles, as was shown in the month just closed. The far-famed Derby collection of paintings, comprising in it many works of rare merit by the most eminent artists of Europe, was for a few weeks exhibited at the National Academy of Design, and attracted the most marked attention. At the close of the exhibition the collection was removed to the gallery of Messrs. Leavitt, Strebeigh & Co., Clinton Hall, Astor Place, where it was sold by auction on the evenings of January 24 and 25. The sale was one of the most successful ever held in this city, and amounted in the aggregate to upward of \$100,000.

Among the pictures sold, a fine example by Merle, brought \$4,200; "Still Life," by Desgoffe, \$2,800; "The Difficult Answer," by Baugnert, \$2,400; "The Harvester," by Bongucrean, \$4,100; "The Troubled Conscience," by Gallait, \$3,000; and the works of other great and modern masters were taken at equally high prices.

As the entire collection only numbered one hundred and fifty-four examples, and of them, at least, some six or eight of the largest and most valuable were passed during the sale, the magnitude of the average prices obtained may be readily estimated. Of the pictures sold, at least three quarters of them were bought by strangers or residents of neighboring cities.

The fourth winter exhibition of the American Society of Painters in Water Colors, was opened at the galleries of the National Academy of Design on the evening of January 24. The collection numbered about one hundred and seventy examples,

and it is gratifying to know that in point of merit the display is decidedly in advance of those of former years. Among the contributors, Samuel Colman sends eight drawings, all of them works of merit, one of the first of which is entitled, "Cordova," from a study made by the artist while sojourning in Spain a few years ago. Of our other leading water colorists, William Hart, president of the society, is represented by six brilliant drawings; A. H. Wyant, by four; Harry Fenn, by seven; Magratt, by three; and Nicol Burling, Smillie, W. T. Richards, Darley, Lumley, and Falconer, by one or more examples.

The eleventh annual collection of the Artists' Fund Society, was opened for exhibition at the Somerville Art Gallery, on the 30th of January, and was sold by auction for the benefit of the Fund, on the following Monday. The leading contributors to the exhibition and sale this year, were G. H. Boughton, Beard, Brown, Bristol, Carter, Casilear, Cropsey, Darley, Guy, Mrs. Greatorex, D. Johnson, E. Johnson, Loop, Kensett, Laurie, T. Addison Richards, Tait, Sonntag, Whittredge, Williamson, and Wyant.

In the studios, those among our artists who paint good pictures are reasonably busy on commissioned work. S. J. Guy has more orders on his books than he can fill in a year. His latest picture is an exquisitely finished interior, with the figure of a boy seated on the floor with a slate in his hands, and earnestly studying some problem which he has marked upon it. The figure is beautifully drawn, and in its refined qualities of color the work may be equalled, but not excelled, during the present art season. Kruseman Van Elten has just finished a bold and rugged landscape view, illustrating a "Gorge in the Hartz Mountains." The effect delineated is that of early morning, with the cool gray shadows yet resting on the mountain sides, and the peaks and pinnacles just glistening in the first rays of the rising sun. Van Elten is a strong colorist, and in this example, in its brilliant effects of light and shade, his vigorous powers in that direction have had free play. Dr. W. F. Clark, an artist who, in his finished works, always gives expression to some subtle and refined effect of nature, is at present painting a large picture, illustrating a "View of Mounts Adams and Jefferson," overlooking the Androscoggin river, from the neighborhood of Berlin village. In the foreground is a country road, on which a yoke of cattle, harnessed to a farm wagon, are lazily wending their way; and overlooking the tree tops in the valley of the Androscoggin may be seen the clustering houses of the village, their roofs tinged with an effect of golden sunlight. The mountains rise in the background, drawn against a mellow golden-tinted autumn sky.

Ernest Parton, among other finished works in his studio, exhibits a large and carefully finished picture, "A view of the White Mountains from near Shelburne," showing the important peaks of Adams, Jefferson and Washington in the distant background. The valley of the Androscoggin, with its quiet pastoral features, forms the foreground and adds to the interest of the same.

A. F. Tait, has just sent out from his studio an exquisite realization of the season of spring, with its early flowers, apple blossoms, and other delicious reminiscences of that period of showers and sunshine, when all nature is awakened from the

deep repose of winter. In the picture the delineation of the pink-tinted apple blossoms is rendered with the most marvelous truth and power.

E. D. Nelson, one of our most enthusiastic students of nature, and whose studies of wood-lands and mountain scenery are unexcelled by those of any American painter, has begun, from sketches made during the past summer, a large and important picture, "A view of St. Regis Lake," with its romantic hills and forest surroundings. The painting, as far as finished, bids fair to excel any of Mr. Nelson's former works.

THEODORE C. GRANNIS.

BROOKLYN.

THE ART BUILDING.

The hope and the boast of the art-loving citizens of Brooklyn that ere long their city will be an art centre, seems in a fair way to be realized. Already the Academy of Design, re-organized only last fall, is in an over-flowing state, and under skilled instructors is forming some excellent young artists and draughtsmen, and now the long talked of and long needed art building, which has been under consideration for some time, is actually under way, and is expected to be ready for use in something less than one year's time.

The site is on the southerly side of Montague street, west of the Academy of Music, and will be connected with a portion of it. It will be four stories high in front, with Mansard roof, and an ample basement. An imposing tower, one hundred feet high from the sidewalk, and twenty-five feet above the highest point of the main building, will be built at the eastern end. The building will have a frontage of fifty by a depth of ninety feet, and be of the French-gothic style, with carved arches and rich ornamentation. A handsome iron gate, approached by a flight of stone steps, guards a massive and generous door, set with windows for lighting the hall-way. This, throughout the building will be massive-looking, the wall formed of vari-colored bricks, and the beams of the stairway being left exposed and finished with carving. The basement will contain the evening schools for classes in the antique, life and elementary classes, and also offices in the front part for real estate, insurance, or other light business. The bulk of the first floor will be used as a bank, the broad entrance-hall and stairway and a drawing room occupying the residue. On the second floor is the main gallery for exhibiting oil paintings. It is forty-eight by sixty-six feet in dimensions, and occupies a part of the third story. It will be lighted by an unprecedentedly large sky-light; a smaller room, twenty by twenty-four, will be used for a water-color exhibition room. On the floor above will be a room for statuary. Studios of the same dimensions as the water-color room, twenty by twenty-four, will occupy the top floor. The main portion of the exterior of the building is of a light Ohio cut stone, the trimmings will be Scotch sandstone, of which the greater portion of Glasgow is built; in color it is nearly white. The building will be a beautiful and creditable one. Messrs. J. Cleveland Cady and H. M. Congdon, of Trinity Building, New York, are the architects. The building committee is composed of Edward J. Lowber, Esq., Ethelbert S. Mills, and Henry Sanger, city judge; Alex. McCue, Josiah O. Low, J. Howe, Richard W. Hubbard, John J. Van Nos-

trand, and H. G. Reeve, of the Art Association, by which the building is erected. The officers are E. S. Mills, president; Gordon L. Ford, treasurer; Bryan H. Smith, secretary.

GOULD'S STATUE OF "THE WEST WIND."

The Hon. Demas Barnes, of Brooklyn, is to be numbered among the art patrons of the United States, and to him, in common with others of wealth and influence, who use that wealth and influence for the furtherance of art in this country, the thanks of all art lovers are due. During his recent visit to Europe, Mr. Barnes made it a part of his mission to select a number of large and valuable works of art, both in sculpture and in painting. Among the former was a full length statue, in finest Carrara marble, from the hand of Thomas R. Gould, of Boston, now in Florence, Italy, called, "The West Wind," to personate American enterprise. The statue will soon be revealed to the public. Recently, through the well-known courtesy of Mr. Barnes, a number of the artists and members of the New York and Brooklyn press, was afforded a private view at his residence, in First place, South Brooklyn, and enjoyed his bounteous hospitality. The statue has excited considerable comment, from the novel points contained in it. The figure is of a young girl, represented as just rising from the earth. It is half nude to the waist, and semi-masculine in appearance. The drapery floats back as if blown by the wind, and seems to support the statue, with the aid of a rock past which it floats. The dexterity with which the sculptor has overcome this mechanical difficulty, is remarkable and most praiseworthy. A full criticism of it will be afforded our readers in a succeeding number.

LE MOYNE BURLEIGH.

PHILADELPHIA.

ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS.

The principal subject of consideration in art circles is the proposed Academy of the Fine Arts, which is (so we have for some time been informed) to be the finest in America. No doubt it could easily be made so, for the old Academy possesses a number of really fine pictures, such as Sully's life-size "Queen Victoria;" Nehlig's life-size "Pat Lyon at his forge;" Sully's life-size "George Frederick Cook," the great actor, as Richard III.; Gilbert Stuart's life-size "Washington;" Wiltkomp's colossal "Deliverance of Leyden;" Benjamin West's immense "Death on the Pale Horse;" the same artist's large pictures, "The Dead Man Restored;" "Peter and Paul;" several by Vernet, and others, purchased at the sale of the Bonaparte collection, several large pictures by Leslie, "The Iron Worker," an admirable picture, by Schuselle, and a number of others, which I have not the space to mention, but which would form the nucleus for a collection which, with additions promised by a number of our wealthy citizens, could not be surpassed in this country. So far, all is very satisfactory, but you will doubtless remember, when the old Academy was sold to Mr. Fox for his theatre, the members of the association determined to select a site for their new Academy, and build at once. In the meantime the pictures were stowed away in various places, and since then have not seen the light of day. Nor has the new Academy been com-

menced. Indeed, the directors have been strangely reticent. It has been rumored, and the rumor seems to be authentic, that they have purchased a lot at Broad and Cherry. The location is excellent—could scarcely be better. But, here the matter has stopped. No plans have been, so far, gotten up for the new Academy, and the silence of the directors can only be interpreted in one way—that they have spent their money in the purchase of the lot, and have none left for the building. I hope this is not so—but it looks very much like it. If it is so, why don't they speak, and call upon the patrons of art to help them? I am confident many of our rich men would respond liberally. However, the Directors, who are old gentlemen, doubtless prefer the slow and (*peut etre*) sure way of going about their work. They had better let the public know something, though, for the papers are becoming impatient at the apparently unnecessary delay, and are waiting to know the meaning of it.

UNION LEAGUE EXHIBITIONS.

Owing to the non-existence of our Academy, the Union League has kindly offered to play patron of the arts, and several exhibitions have been given. I hesitate to speak of them, because I cannot say anything very flattering. They were better than nothing—that is all. The first exhibition took place in January, and was composed of second-class pictures, the majority of which had been exhibited before. They were crowded into one room, which was too small for them, and attracted no attention. The second exhibition took place on the 11th of February. It was better than the first, for it contained a superb picture, by Hamilton, who is acknowledged to be the great marine painter of America; several by Bonfield, whose snow scenes are so much admired; a bright, pretty effort, called "A Village Fair," by Schuselle, which, however, lacked strength, and several others worthy of mention, but it was not an exhibition which calls for more than passing mention. It lasted two evenings, and attracted goodly assemblages, for the tickets were free.

JAMES HAMILTON.

Hamilton has moved to a beautiful studio, over McCann's picture gallery, and has for the present deserted his Egyptian ruins and magnificent sunsets for his practical subjects, and is painting views of Boston harbor and vicinity, from sketches which he made when there. There is rumor that Hamilton will be called upon to paint an immense marine battle piece for the rotunda of the Capitol, at Washington. Hamilton could do it better than any other artist I know of. He is a master of effect—he possesses true genius. He is not appreciated here as he deserves. Our Academy (if we are ever to have one) should possess some of his pictures, where the world can see and understand them. As it is now, many of his greatest works lie buried in private collections.

D. R. KNIGT F.

This excellent artist and estimable gentleman has improved steadily, as his picture, "Othello at the House of Brabantio" shows, for it is effectively composed and is full of rich color. Mr. Knight had two very pretty *genre* pictures at the Union League Exhibition, which attracted much admiration. He intends returning to Europe

soon. Philadelphia will be sorry to lose one of her most industrious and successful artists.

ROTHERMEL'S GETTYSBURG.

We have here on exhibition the greatest historical picture yet painted in America. Those who have ever doubted Rothermel's ability, are compelled to acknowledge that he has achieved a veritable triumph. The canvas is colossal, and the subject, which, from an artistic point of view, is comparatively uninteresting, and extremely difficult to manage, has been treated with masterly skill. The monotony of the gray uniforms of the rebels and the cold blue uniforms of the Union soldiers, must naturally give great trouble to an artist to overcome, for the fault of such a picture, treated by a second-class artist, would be a painful lack of brilliancy in color. This, however, Rothermel has overcome, as completely as is possible to overcome it, while the grouping and details are managed superbly. Such a picture is a credit not only to Philadelphia but to the country. Rothermel, having obtained possession of it until a certain time, is exhibiting it in Chestnut street, above Tenth, where it is being visited by crowds. It will afterwards be taken to New York and to the principal cities, so that New York and Chicago will have a chance to see it. You know, I suppose, that it was painted for the State, at a cost of \$30,000, and is to go to Harrisburg—but there is such an objection to its being buried there, that efforts are being made to have it kept in Philadelphia.

ART NOTES.

Mr. Sully is always busy. I saw him the other day, and was glad to learn that he is in excellent health.

V. de V. Bonfield has just finished several charming winter scenes. His snow effects are admirably managed, and are very popular. He receives orders for them from all over the country, and is kept constantly occupied.

Among our rising artists, I may mention the name of Henry W. Whiting, who possesses real ability, and is very industrious. His landscapes are excellent—good in composition, color and finish, and his animal pictures are spirited and well drawn. I predict for Mr. Whiting an enviable position among our artists. He is already attracting attention, and I have seen some of his pictures lately, in McCann's gallery, which were really beautiful.

Russell Smith is still on his farm at Jenkintown, where he paints with all that charming grace which has given him so enviable a reputation. His son, Xanthus, and his daughter, Mary, inherit their father's talent. Xanthus paints landscapes admirably, and Mary paints chickens, ducks, and other fowls, with surprising skill. Her pictures are very popular.

Speaking of rising artists reminds me of a young sculptor who is attracting a great deal of attention here. His name is Joseph Obermeier, is a German, and has been in Philadelphia only a few years, but during that time he has studied carefully, and has lately produced a number of statuettes, which are certainly worthy of more than I praise. His bust of Longfellow is particularly successful; so is his statuette of Dickens, while his statue of Penelope is full of grace and beauty. Obermeier will some day, not far off, do

something which will give him high rank among our sculptors.

RITER FITZGERALD.

SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

At the opening of the autumnal term, I made a visit to this highly useful institution, and it was extremely gratifying to see the tasteful arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the pupils, combined with the facilities for study. The building itself is located corner of Filbert street and North-west Penn Square, and designed solely as an art school for women. It was incorporated in the year 1853. Mr. T. W. Braidwood, who is an enthusiast on the subject of establishing schools of design, is principal of the institution. He has labored for the past twenty years in the above named work, and, with the co-operation of others, has succeeded in establishing schools of design in various parts of Pennsylvania.

The students at this school are engaged five hours daily; and at the close of last term, sixty-two were in attendance. Here is to be found a systematic course of training in the scientific principles and practice of art. The elementary course is arranged for the study of form, light and shade, color and perspective. The full course occupies from two to four years and a half, much depending upon the industry of the student. The expense of instruction is very small, not exceeding forty dollars per annum.

The studies in the preliminary stages must be executed with clearness and precision; and the last study must be commenced and finished without instruction, as a criterion from which to decide whether the student shall be retained or advanced. There is to be seen here a fine collection of floral specimens—a pleasing feature of the course of instruction being the study of practical botany—and once a week the students are engaged with drawing and painting, in water colors, plant forms, mostly from nature.

Drawing and painting the human figure from the antique and life; landscape painting in water and oil colors; designing patterns for calico, paper, and oil-cloth; lithography and wood engraving, are embraced in the course of studies pursued in the professional classes.

The studies from the *stat*, embrace every description of examples used in the European schools. Among the art studies from ancient, mediæval and modern marbles, are the "Lacoon Group," "Castor and Pollux," and "The Boxers." In the collection of statues are "Venus of Milo," "Apollo Belvidere," "Antinous of the Capitol," "Jason," "Fighting Gladiator," "Venus, from the baths of Claudius," "Venus de Medici," "Dying Gladiator," and "Supplication." The busts from the Greek and Roman models number seventy-five, including the mythological subjects. The eight anatomical casts, together with over two hundred casts of the figure in detail, consisting of hands and feet, arms, masks, features from the antique and life, form a fine collection for study. There is also a collection of ancient, mediæval and modern historic ornaments;—the ancient and mediæval, including specimens from the Greek, Roman, Gothic, Saracenic, and Byzantine.

No stranger should fail to visit this excellent institution, and the writer will conclude by expressing a wish that similar schools may be established in all the cities of our Union.

M. S. G.

CINCINNATI.

Unfortunately for the artists of this city, there are no suitable places for the exhibition of pictures, except Wiswell's Hall, which has been only occasionally used for that purpose. The last collection was gathered together under the management of Miss Jennie Robinson, now Mrs. Bradford, of New York, who inaugurated, in connection with the gallery, a series of receptions, musical and otherwise, which became exceedingly popular and met with much encouragement. The present winter has not been enlivened with any efforts toward an exhibition, and it is doubtful if any project of the kind will be entertained before another season. The consequence is, that the many really meritorious works of our artists are never seen here, except an occasional landscape, which, braving sunshine and the contact of gaudy chromos, finds its way into the shop windows, to its own, as well as its author's sorrow. Most of the better class of productions are sent to other cities, where more encouragement is offered, and the proper facilities for exhibition afforded. One of the most important works, now being executed here, is "The Slave Market," by Mr. T. S. Noble, which promises to be a picture of unusual excellence, and the best of this energetic artist. It represents one of the auctions in those ante-bellum days when dealers in mankind vended their wares under the very shadows of justice and liberty. The characters selected, their arrangement and action, have all been apparently studied by Mr. Noble with care, and he has already succeeded in telling a powerful story in a language of exquisite gradation of tone, combined with strong effect.

The McMicken School of Design, which is in charge of this artist, is progressing finely, and now numbers over one hundred and twenty pupils, of all grades. The accommodations are at present limited, and in a measure prevents its usefulness from being more extended. It is, however, the intention of the trustees to enlarge its facilities by a removal to other quarters and the introduction of additional instructors, another season.

Mr. R. S. Duncanson, the well-known landscape painter, is engaged upon a number of commissions for Philadelphia, of Scottish scenery, from studies made during his sojourn abroad. His smaller works are, many of them, exceeding attractive, both in handling and tone, and are preferable to his larger canvasses, which need power.

Mr. T. C. Lindsay has upon his easel a view near Great Bend, Pa., which bids fair to do him much credit. It has all the vigorous management of light and shade which mark his former works, combined with great freedom, and lacks refinement of color less than other efforts shown heretofore. Mr. Denise, one of our younger but more promising landscape painters, has been elaborating some of his last summer's Miami sketches. His works are always conscientiously painted, and possess many qualities akin to nature, but are often overwrought and too suggestive of Pre-Raphaelitism. Mr. Kemper has recently exhibited a view on the Mohawk, which is an improvement on his previous works.

Mr. C. T. Weber has completed his McCook family, and is about visiting Columbus to effect its sale to the State. His late portrait of Governor Hayes is considered a success. Aubrey Hoffman and Strauss are mostly engaged upon portraits,

and are fully employed. Mosler, whose *genre* pictures attracted so much attention, has located in New York. His studio is in Dodworth's Building. In the department of sculpture a number of works have been executed deserving of mention, prominent among which is the Lincoln monument, recently erected in the rotunda of the State House at Columbus. This was carved in marble from the original designs, modelled by Mr. Louis Rebisso, the sculptor. One of the most noticeable features of the work is an alto-relievo entablature, representing the surrender of Pemberton at Vicksburg. The figures of Grant, Sherman and McPherson are introduced, and the character of each well portrayed. This portion of the work is open to the serious objection of being somewhat mechanical, as well as mathematical, in its arrangement. The surrender is represented to have taken place under a tree placed in the exact centre of the picture, on either side of the trunk being arranged two groups, facing one another, each consisting of four figures and a horse. The act of surrender is indicated by the transfer of the terms of capitulation from Pemberton to Grant. This also takes place exactly opposite the tree which separates the entire design into two equal parts. A more objectionable arrangement could hardly be conceived. This fault, however, should not be ascribed to Mr. Rebisso, but is due to the contractor, who, deficient in art knowledge, assumed the direction of work for which he lacked the capacity. The Confederates, who compose one of the groups mentioned, are none of them likenesses, not even Pemberton, who is most prominent. This is also owing to the gross negligence of the contractor, and destroys the historic value of the work. The exquisite modelling of the groups, and the fine colossal head of Lincoln which surmounts the whole, both from Mr. Rebisso's hand, alone save the work from entire condemnation. Mr. Berry is a recent accession to our art-ranks and has a high reputation in the East as a sculptor. He is understood to be engaged on several minor works of merit. It is yet too early to speak advisedly of his qualities, no work of importance having been completed since his coming among us. PAUL PALLETTE.

CHICAGO.

ACADEMY RECEPTION.

The second reception of the Academy of Design took place on the evening of Wednesday, February 8, and was largely attended by artists, connoisseurs, and the fashionable public. A large number of new pictures were obtained from Eastern artists, for the occasion; but the contributions from home studios were meagre, and very ordinary in quality, as a rule.

The hanging committee are entitled to no small praise for the conscientious manner in which they discharged their thankless task. They omitted securing the best places on "the line" for their own works, and hung the pictures, on their merits, with due regard to tone and contrast.

Speaking of the collection generally—that is, the new pictures—it can only be called mediocre. There are no first class works, and very few entitled to the second place. The portraits, of which there are many, with a very few exceptions, which will be mentioned in the proper place, are poor, the majority being positively bad in color and drawing. The *genres* are few in number, and

none are worthy of an extended notice. All are trifles, and some have the appearance of sketches thrown off *pour passer le temps*. The various schools are represented, there being specimens of the Dusseldorf, French, Flemish, and Munich academies. The American school of landscape is largely represented, but in the entire collection, there is nothing of a marked character, save the *pièce de resistance* of the exhibition—Bierstadt's "Emerald Pool." On close inspection, we recognize effects differing in no respect from what we have seen two or three times a year, or oftener, during the last half decade. There is a reproduction of the same trees, the same golden light, the same range of hills, snow-capped peaks, brooks and cattle. The rock-bound coast, the sandy beach and placid water or rolling surf, we have seen before, worked up in the same manner; and as we look along, we are forcibly reminded of G. P. R. James' novels, with the oft-recurring "solitary horseman." It is mannerism, mannerism, everywhere. Original ideas of composition and treatment have been molded over and over again, losing strength and vigor at each manipulation, until there is nothing now but the work of a "picture factory," instead of the creation of genius.

Bierstadt's "Emerald Pool" is the *chef d'œuvre* of the exhibition, and comes here with lengthy encomiums of eastern critics. In differing in opinion from these gentlemen, we will doubtless be accused of heresy. It cannot be helped. In this extensive canvas, Mr. Bierstadt has winged a long flight from his usual style, and we do not think for the better. He has rushed into a luxuriance of color, after the manner of Cropsey, but with more prodigality, and at the same time, with more strength. The immediate foreground is handled with a care and exactitude that recalls the palmiest days of Pre-Raphaelitism, and the same may be said of the mid-distance. The mountain peak, capped with snow, in the back ground, forms a remarkable contrast to the gorgeous hues of Indian summer, the deep placid pool, and the heavy masses of rock, deep in shadow in the foreground. As a composition, it is wanting in coherency; to use the technical phrase, "it is too much cut up," and in the luxuriance of the color in the foliage, there is a massing for effect that panders to the sensational, and destroys the natural. We may add that the picture is so draped and the reflection of light so managed as to give the spectator very little enjoyment in his endeavors to understand it.

Beard's "Dancing Bears" (47), is a picture well known by reputation, and has long been exhibited in the East. Some of the critics have gone into ecstasies over it, for the moral lesson which they say it teaches; and others, for the so-called masterly handling of color and treatment of composition. That it is entitled to all the commendations bestowed upon it, we positively deny. In point of story, it is far inferior to his "Bar Room Politicians." The monkeys in the latter have faces almost human, and their actions are faithful to the prototypes to be found in any ward politicians' headquarters, in any of our large cities. The bears are only having a frolic, a rural picnic, in which, while the amenities of high-toned civilization may not be regarded, there is nothing but merriment and good feeling. The best piece of color in the picture is the left foreground, which is nicely handled.

"Lake of four Cantons" (63), by Buetler, is a small Alpine scene—a little lake in the foreground and rugged mountains at the back. Sky, water and rocks are nicely painted, though there is a sharpness and severity in drawing and composition that betrays the Dusseldorf.

"Cherries for Grandpa" (65), by Diffenbach, is much more of a sketch than a finished picture. The subject is treated with that delicacy and fondness for "old and young" which distinguished this artist.

"Autumn in the Adirondacks" (56), by Williamson, is one of those pretty little effects, which, when seen, is almost immediately forgotten. The middle distance and aerial perspective are better than the foreground.

Portrait (79), by Pebbles, is the three-quarter length of a well known citizen. As a portrait, it is only a moderate success, and is wanting in strength of color and modeling.

Portrait of a lady (32), by Le Clear. It is infinitely inferior to that of Parke Godwin, by the same artist.

"Shades of Evening" (21), by Bristol, has a tender pastoral feeling, and is carefully handled in color and drawing.

Portrait (109), by Pickering. This detracts from, rather than adding to the reputation of the artist. There is too much machine work about it, and denotes carelessness.

"The First Begotten" (68), by Hamemann, of Dusseldorf. There is a stiffness in the drawing; an absence of texture to the drapery, and the composition is only mediocre.

"Peaches and Grapes" (110), by Reed *fils*. The former are better than the latter, though as a whole it exhibits conscientious work and an improvement.

"Willows at Hampton Beach" (76), W. A. Gay, has good distance, is strong in color, and the massive trunks of the willows in the foreground are faithfully rendered.

"Snow Bound" (119) and "Hard Hit" (105), by Earle, are two winter scenes, in which figure a hare and a pheasant. In both we find a careful handling of fur and feathers. The landscape in the latter is the better.

"On the Prairie" (60), W. H. Beard. Half a dozen cranes strolling through the tall prairie grass. A nice piece of color and good drawing.

"On the Frontier," by Nehlig. A party of ante-revolutionary fathers, driving the Indians out of their retreat. This is a clever sketch, possessing much of the marked freedom and strength of this artist. Some of the figures are rather stiff.

Portrait (81), by Truesdal. This lacks grace in pose; the drapery wants texture, and the head is deficient in expression and strength.

Autumn Twilight (53), by Kensett. Atmosphere, distance, falling night, and foreground are nicely handled. There is a great deal of tenderness in feeling.

Portrait (95), by Clifford. We fail to see anything in it worthy of commendation.

A portrait of one of the publishers of the *Post* (104), by Henderson, has many good points, and exhibits study and a conscientious desire to give a portrait revealing some of the characteristics of the subject. The head is a little too light in color to be pronounced perfect as a likeness.

Scene in Wisconsin (91), by Bigelow. This

shows more warmth and strength than are usually to be found in the works of this artist.

French Fishing Boats (30), by Codchancy. The treatment of the water is somewhat after the style of Ziem. The boats are nicely drawn, and the composition is animated.

Portrait of a child (102), by Coggsell, is faulty in drawing and in color. The drapery offends the eye.

"The Visitors" (70), by Miller, of Munich, is a charming little *genre* of the style of Diffenbach. The old man, drawing the cork to treat his visitor, is well handled and full of expression.

"Near Simsbury," Conn. (59), by Shattuck, is one of those charming little landscapes, which we occasionally see from this artist's brush.

Portrait (45), by Dodge. This head is remarkable for an utter absence of flesh texture.

"The Last Gleam" (48), by William Hart. This work is doubtless intended as a companion to his "Golden Hours," but is greatly superior to it. There is much in the composition of the landscape and the handling of light, that are to be found in the works of this artist, though at the same time, we have seen many of his smaller and less pretentious pictures, which please us better.

Narragansett (67), by Kensett. This is one of the best pictures we have had from this artist's brush, in many a day. The calm blue sea, the sandy beach and the clear sky are faithfully rendered.

A portrait of a lady, by Pine (82), has a few good points, but these are overshadowed by others, which are positively bad. The hands are incorrect in drawing, and weak in color. The drapery wants texture.

"A View in the Adirondacks," by Reed (86), is cold in color.

"The Susquehanna Hills," by Smilie (1),—an autumn scene, which is nicely worked up, both in drawing and color. The atmosphere in particular, is clearly defined.

The "Enchantress" (77), by Hamilton Wild, is more ambitious than meritorious, and too sensational. There are defects both in the drawing and handling of color.

"Jumping Jack," and "Reprimanding Dolly" (61 and 62), by Aufray of Paris, are a couple of little *genres*, of a trifling character, and although worked up with great care, can only be considered trifles.

A portrait, by Troendel (83), is very bad in color, and almost equally so in drawing.

"The Stranded Vessel" (12), is one of those delicious cabinet marines, which De Haas handles with so much care and skill.

"A Shady Nook" (101), by Elkins, is, without exception, the best work we have seen from the easel of this artist.

"Autumn" (13), by Samuel Coleman, is carefully drawn and skilfully handled in color.

A portrait, by Clifford (95), is bad in every respect.

"Beggars at Church" (122), by Highwood, is the best of the *genres* exhibited by this artist. The drawing has some of the angularity and stiffness of the Dusseldorf school, but there is greater freedom and ease in the handling of color.

Two portraits (92 and 113), by Jenks, are the best heads we have ever seen from his easel. That of the lady is particularly strong in modeling; the flesh tints are handled carefully and truthfully, and

the lights and shadows are nicely gradated. There is a little faulty drawing in the shoulders of the gentleman, but the treatment of the head is equal to that of the lady.

SECOND ANNUAL RECEPTION, OPERA HOUSE ART GALLERY.

The social event of the season was the annual reception and ball of the Opera House Gallery, which took place on the evening of February 20. The attendance was large and fashionable, and at the same time included all the well-known connoisseurs, critics, and *litterati* of the city. Manager Aitken spared neither pains nor expense, and to his æsthetic taste and untiring exertions, those who were present are indebted for a feast of beauty, artistic and natural, seldom witnessed. The minute details of the affair, the decorations, music, menu, etc., have been fully described in the daily press, and need no repetition here, at this late date.

We have only to do with the pictures, and here we may parenthetically remark, that delays over which the railroads had no control, compelled Mr. Aitken to open the gallery, without the collection which he had secured in, and had been shipped a week previous from, New York. This was a source of sore disappointment; nevertheless, the display, as a whole, was very satisfactory. Old friends were taken down and placed in new positions, making contrasts which developed many points heretofore unnoticed even by the sharpest critics. The hanging of pictures is an art, and much as we admired Mr. Aitken's skill in the past, we are now perfectly willing to accord him the greatest praise.

The delay alluded to, of course, rendered the display of novelties rather meagre. Almost one half was contributed by artists whose studios are in the building, and with some half dozen exceptions, these were portraits, ranging from good downwards, lower than we would again like to see. No contributions were made by the artists in the Academy, and this we regret, because such action is liable to run into an exclusiveness and petty jealousy, that will do much more to the degradation than the elevation of art. But to the pictures.

The first place was assigned to a portrait of Nilsson, by Phillips, which was, we think, very injudiciously placed in a dark room, heavily draped, and exhibited only by a strong gas light. [This mode of showing off pictures, we are opposed to. It is one of the "tricks of the trade," and has no connection with art. A pure æsthetic taste will have no affinity with anything approximating a sham; and on general principles, it may be laid down as a rule, that a picture which requires an artificial light to show off some theatrical clap-trap, is deficient in some quality, and that this want can only be overshadowed by the "glittering generality," which the flickers and glare of a gas jet always impart, at the expense of sore eyes to the beholder.] This kind of treatment the pictures of this artist do not require, and to Nilsson, it was positively unkind. The portrait is a three-quarter length, and represents the fair Swede in that blue *gros grain* silk, which she wore at one of her concerts in this city. Her hair is done up *a la Grecque*, and on her head is the golden wreath with which she was crowned by the Svea Society. The attitude is one of repose in action. The head is turned

slightly to the right, and the light so falls on the face as to completely round off those sharp angularities which distinguish the features of the Swedish race. As if by magic, those high cheek bones and sunken eyes, have disappeared, and if we have not a Venus de Medici, we have what is far better, and much more attractive, a beauty of soul and a face brimful of tenderness. In the expression of the eyes, the artist has succeeded admirably. They are full of sentiment and feeling, almost pathetic. The features are in full repose; the mouth, partly open, displays a row of pearls; and at the same time, its contour is in perfect harmony with the expression of the eyes. There is a feeling of longing for "the old folks at home." Notwithstanding she is at the highest elevation in the social circle, and the idol of the musical world, in this country and in Europe, she still feels that

"All the world am sad and dreary,
Everywhere I roam."

Of the drapery there is little to be said. It is no ornament whatever. It is a "pent up Utica," and is wanting in the essentials of either beauty or freedom. This is in consequence of the artist being restricted to a three-quarter length. Had it been full-length, Mr. Phillips would have had an opportunity to have done justice to the *gros grain* in its graceful folds of skirt and elongated train. As it now is, it is stiff, narrow, and contracted. A critic on one of the morning papers, has truthfully remarked, that the right hand appears larger than the left, and his probable reason therefor—an absence of a clear definition in the foreshortening inwards of the latter—is undoubtedly correct, so far as it goes, but it must be remembered that the right is in profile, which gives it an apparent though not an actual increase in length.

Mr. Phillips also exhibits five bust portraits, the best of which is that of a well-known physician of the city. In this portrait he has given a flesh texture that we have seen surpassed, but by very few artists.

Gollman is represented by four portraits—three gentlemen and one lady. In all of the heads of this artist, we at once recognize the severity of the Dusseldorf school of drawing. His long experience in "pastel" renders his treatment of oil harsh and unsatisfactory—the result can only be inharmonious, and such it is, in the portraits referred to.

Harvey, one of our most studious young artists, is represented by only one portrait, that of an old gentleman, a resident of Burlington. In modeling, in handling of flesh, in strength, it develops conscientious labor *con amore*, and it is not making an odious comparison to say that in many respects it is superior to a portrait hung in close proximity.

Henderson exhibits the head of a gentleman, with a mustache surpassing that of Don Quixote. This hirsute appendage is the *motif* of the picture, and we may add, of the original. There is nothing else remarkable in the head. An unfinished portrait in the studio of this artist, gives promise of a much superior artistic finish, and it is only to be regretted that it had not taken the place of the mustached individual.

Earl's "Notice to Dogs" is *sui generis*, and in treatment presents a fund of humor worthy of the painter of "Dignity and Impudence." There is a slight inaccuracy in the drawing of one of

the canines, but in every other respect it is perfect. The handling of color is excellent.

"Storm off the Coast of Norway," by Holst, is a careful study of a rock-bound coast, a raging surf, immense waves, an almost dismantled wreck, and the crew just landing on shore. In the handling of the water, in its translucency and action, there is great truthfulness; the sky is dark and gloomy, and the heavy masses of clouds, pregnant with storm and disaster, seem to be borne along in the arms of a hurricane. There is a coldness in the color of the figures, which somewhat detracts from the general effect, and this peculiarity we have noticed in many of his most ambitious works.

"Ice Bound," by this artist, is a scene somewhere up in the neighborhood of the north pole, and doubtless was suggested by Church's icebergs. It, however, can only be called a trifle; there is wanting the marvelous play and combination of color that mark the setting sun in those northern latitudes.

Mayer, of Brooklyn, sends two capital *genres*, animal studies, exhibiting the ruling passion strong in sickness. A Scotch terrier sick in bed, and the same on the *qui vive*, ears erect, eyes aglow, on the look out for the rodent, who is supposed to be about, on hearing the cry, "Sic! rats!"

Wilsch's "View of Venice," with the blue Adriatic in the foreground, is one of the most carefully finished pictures in the exhibition. There is nothing for the critic to do but commend it.

Two coast scenes very much in the same vein, Musin and Schellouch, are exquisite views of fishing life on the Holland beach.

Verboeckhoven is recognized by his sheep, lamb, and chicken.

Two studies, by Brookes, of San Francisco, are on exhibition. One, a couple of fish, is elegantly finished. The other, though not completed, is faulty in composition.

"The Proposal," by Erdmann, the private property of a gentleman in this city, is, without exception, the finest specimen of the modern French school in the gallery. In drawing, in color, expression, and attention to detail, it is perfect, and tells its own story with a clearness that needs no explanation.

Billy Beard sends two sketches, both of which are very ordinary, and remarkable only for want of point and absence even of decent drawing. Van Coomer is the reputed author of the "Coming Storm," but we question very much the originality of the composition. A shepherd has huddled his flock in the vicinity of a wayside cross, which his Sunday school lessons incline him to believe will be a protection from the coming storm. The sheep are admirably drawn and colored, but in every other respect there is a positive weakness.

Robie—and who has not heard of or seen the wonderful flower pictures of this artist?—is represented by a magnificent bouquet, in which buds, leaves and stems are painted with the most fidelity.

The collection of water colors is small but exquisite—mostly flower pieces, from the pencil of Miss De Gollyer, Mrs. Bulkley, and Mrs. Fisher.

G. M. GOMEZ.

ST. LOUIS.

Messrs. Pettis & Leathe, in their new rooms on Fourth street, have opened a small room, on the ground floor, for the exhibition of a limited number of pictures, in which the conditions of light are better than in the old gallery. Quite a number of good foreign and native pictures are to be seen there, and the people are resorting to it. The artists in the insurance building have about established the custom of receiving visitors on Saturday afternoon, and find it a pleasant arrangement. But we feel continually the need of a public gallery. I regret to say that the day seem as far off as ever when such an enterprise may be inaugurated.

There is at Pettis & Leathe's two small animal pieces by Tait, painted in his best style, and a larger picture, in which the figure of a girl and the landscape is by James M. Hart, and a fine show of ducks and ducklings by Tait. They have also two pictures by Van Starckenbrough, lately received from Germany, both of great merit. One of these, a view beside a river swollen by heavy rains, which are now passing away, leaving the air full of mist, and the foliage and ground moist and tender, is nearly all that one can desire in the way of art. Some fine old oaks are painted with great truthfulness and wealth of patience and labor.

A. G. Powers has had on exhibition portraits of Prof. Bonham and wife, painted in his best style. He has also in his studio some good heads of well-known citizens, that are very satisfactory.

Conant has portraits of a gentleman and lady, in every way worthy of him. The head of the gentleman is full of energy, and painted with more than his usual freedom. Two children, at full length, do not please us near as well.

Eichbaum has finished the head of an old lady that is worthy of commendation. It is painted as if he intended to make something of it, and the will of the artist has mastered the subject.

J. W. Pattison has finished two pictures, both the result of his Minnesota studies. The Home of the Butterflies, and Summer Flowers. The figure of a beautiful girl in the last, is from the pencil of Stuart. These pictures show somewhat of the same talent that we praised in his Pike's Peak. He aims to put in his work enough of the ideal to give them a charm beyond the actual representation—which is in the right direction to reach the highest art.

J. R. Meeker has in his studio several new examples of studies near home, and a good Rocky Mountain Scene. There are also two pictures at Harding's that please us. One, a Rocky Mountain Scene, full of the loveliness and sombre distance that impresses one in those regions; and a sketch near Arcadia, in Missouri, quiet and sunny, with good middle ground.

His picture of Louisiana Scenery, now on exhibition, I think, in Chicago, is to be engraved on steel soon, and appear in the *Ladies' Repository*, published at Cincinnati.

Mr. J. R. Stuart has been lately producing some fine drawings in charcoal, in which he has a skill acquired abroad. There is also in his studio two excellent portraits, lately from his easel, in which we find his usual excellencies.

Mr. J. Pope, of New York, has been spending sometime in St. Louis, and has painted several

portraits which have been much commended. Three or four of these, at Pettis & Leathe's, give a good idea of his abilities, I presume. His flesh tints are pure and brilliant, and there is a delightful air of lightness in all of them, but there is such evidence of haste in some parts, such careless handling and uncertain drawing, that he fails to impress one as a conscientious artist. However pleasing such pictures may be to the masses, they cannot establish the reputation that every artist should labor for.

J. W. McDonald has at the same place his bust of Mr. Harrison, a well-known St. Louis citizen, lately deceased. The likeness is creditable, for the subject had a head and face that once seen could not be easily forgotten, but this bust, like everything I have seen from the artist, has no art in it. It is stone—only this, and nothing more. There is no texture of flesh about it, no breath of genius upon it, and not much skill even of the stone-cutter.

ÆOLIA.

AMERICAN ART LITERATURE.

SPIRIT OF OUR ART WRITERS.

BALL'S STATUE OF GOV. ANDREW.

The Boston *Commonwealth*, authority in matters of art, is severe in its estimate of Thomas Ball's marble Statue, of the late Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, which was formally unveiled and presented to the Commonwealth, on Tuesday forenoon, February 14, in the Doric Hall of the State House. The critic says:

"The intimations of the daily press, that the Andrew statue is a failure, have been more than realized, now that it stands in the clear light of day, and time is given for a full observation of its various phases. Boston has not the credit of possessing many superior works of statuary, particularly of full-length human figures, but bad as the worst of them may be, we have now a statue that, in positive incongruity and palpable error, probably exceeds them all. In truth, there is scarcely a feature in the Andrew, save its remarkable purity of stone, that wins unqualified approbation."

He then commences at the feet, and finds "well-delineated congress boots; and passes to the trowsers, which are "unduly baggy," and worse yet, are leg-less; to the cloak, which is unsatisfactorily draped; and finally—

"Rising to the head, the worse defects, possibly, are here manifest. The likeness is a caricature; not one of those caricatures, like Nast's, which are more natural than a fair portrait, but a semblance only. The sweet, generous mouth of Andrew, so kindly, so quivering, so eloquent in speech or conversation, is wholly wanting. There is no soul in the face; and no inspiration, no up-lifting, whatever, emanates from its presence. The pose is incorrect—this figure inclining forward, while a fleshy man, like the Governor, invariably stands upright, if not leans backward, to counter-balance the weight of his abdominal section. One stands before Beethoven, in Music Hall, and soon feels his spirit aglow with the great master's. One may stand all day before Andrew, and fail to realize, from any dignity or character belonging to it, that he was more than an everyday, plodding sojourner here below. There is a constant contest between what Andrew was in our remembrance and what this statue represents him—the latter belittling, the former elevating him. The wonder is that Thomas Ball should have executed it—a man who certainly should have better knowledge of the human figure."